
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2574

Brief Description: Making alterations to the years applicable to earning the right of first refusal to purchase a geoduck diver license in 2015.

Sponsors: Representatives Chandler and Blake.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Alters the qualifications for receiving the right of first refusal for a geoduck diver license in 2015.

Hearing Date: 1/28/14

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7291).

Background:

In order to engage in commercial geoduck harvesting, a geoduck fishery license must be obtained along with a valid geoduck harvest agreement with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Each diver also needs their own geoduck diver license. The holder of a geoduck diver license does not need to have a geoduck fishery license if he or she is operating under the geoduck fishery license of another.

The geoduck diver license is currently transitioning to a closed fishery. Beginning January 1, 2015, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) may not issue more than 77 geoduck diver licenses in any year. Those with a geoduck diver license will need to complete a geoduck diver safety program in order to maintain status on a DNR's harvest agreement plan of operation. The WDFW will give the right of first refusal to purchase a geoduck diver license in 2015 to individuals who had a geoduck diver license in 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014, and were listed on the DNR's geoduck harvest agreement plan of operation.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

The formula for determining who has the right of first refusal to purchase a geoduck diver license for 2015 is changed. Instead of qualifying if an individual had a geoduck diver license in 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014, the right of first refusal to a geoduck diver license is available to any individual who qualifies under the following three requirements:

- (1) held a geoduck diver license in 2014;
- (2) held a geoduck diver license in one or more of the years 2011, 2012, and 2013; and
- (3) had a DNR's geoduck harvest agreement plan of operation during the same years.

The qualified license holder must make his or her intent to purchase a geoduck diver license in 2015 known to WDFW within six months of July 28, 2013.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.